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# Narcotics Anonymous: A Chronology of the Scientific and Professional Literature

(Revised 12/06/2012; 01/20/2013; 05/09/2013; 12/28/2014; 12/25/2015)

#### William White, Chris Budnick, and Boyd Pickard

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) has not received the degree of attention from the academic and professional communities commensurate with its longevity as an addiction recovery mutual aid society, its membership growth, and its international dispersion. No academic history of NA has been published comparable to *Not-God: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous* by Harvardtrained historian Ernest Kurtz. Where thousands of articles have appeared in professional journals on Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the number of comparable studies focusing specifically on NA is miniscule, and even fewer achieve any kind of methodological rigor in evaluating the effects of NA participation on long-term recovery outcomes. In fact, there are more reviews and meta-analyses of AA-related studies than there are focused scientific studies of NA.

Standard literature searches for scientific studies of NA reveal frequent peripheral references to NA and frequent inclusion of NA within a generic umbrella of "12-Step programs" with no disaggregation of NA data and no specific conclusions drawn that would distinguish effects of NA from other 12-Step fellowships. In fact, there is an underlying assumption within the scientific and professional literature that NA is a clone of AA—that conclusions drawn from AA can be indiscriminately applied to NA and other 12-Step addiction recovery programs. That assumption has been only rarely tested in the scientific literature in spite of the fact that NA has its own quite distinctive history, has faced unique obstacles to its survival and growth, has made changes in AA Steps that are clinically and historically significant, has a membership profile that differs significantly from AA and has a recovery culture (e.g., service structure, iconic figures, language, rituals, etiquette, symbols, literature) quite different than that found in AA.

Many of the basic questions once posed about AA have at least preliminary answers in the research literature, but such answers are not yet available for NA. These questions include intra- and extra-organizational factors related to survival and growth; rates of attraction, engagement, and retention/attrition; short and long-term effects of participation; isolation of "active ingredients" that influence recovery outcomes; effects of concurrent or sequential participation in professional treatment or co-participation in other recovery support organizations; effects of disengagement on recovery stability; and effects of participation across diverse populations of members, e.g., women, youth, ethnic and cultural groups, people with co-occurring disorders, people taking medication, etc.

The length of the list of publications below might at first glance seem to constitute an impressive body of scientific and professional focus on NA, but that is not the case. The

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reference to NA in most of the publications below are tangential and do not constitute a focused examination of NA. There is evidence of growing scientific and professional interest in NA over the past decade, but there has yet to be a clear NA-related research agenda formulated or fulfilled. It is our belief that such an agenda will emerge within the coming decade. To set the stage for the formulation and fulfillment of such an agenda, we have created a working chronology of papers on NA and papers on the broader arena of 12-Step programs with particular implications to NA that have appeared in books aimed at a professional audience or authored by addiction professionals, peer-reviewed scientific and clinical journals, addiction professional trade journals, master's theses and doctoral dissertations, and through books and clinical manuals aimed at addiction professionals.

The search mechanisms used to prepare this chronology include ADAI (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, University of Washington), CORK, Dissertation Abstracts, NIAAA-ETOH, Google Scholar, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses, PsychInfo, PubMed, SAMHSA (Office of Applied Studies), WorldCat Dissertations, and the holdings of the Illinois Addiction Studies Archives.

The history of the larger body of popular literature on NA and NA's own literature is not included in this chronology. Those interested in this literature will find much of it listed at the following site: <a href="http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/pr/2013%20NA%20Chronology%20-%20Volume%20One%202nd%20Edition.pdf">http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/pr/2013%20NA%20Chronology%20-%20Volume%20One%202nd%20Edition.pdf</a>

Readers unfamiliar with the history of NA should know that there is more than one NA, only one of which survived as NA as it is known today. Today's NA dates from its founding in California in 1953, to its near death in 1959, and its subsequent survival and maturation as an addiction recovery mutual aid organization. Many of the earliest references to NA in the below chronology refer to those organizations that can trace their ancestry to the founding of Addicts Anonymous in 1947 and its move to New York City in 1949 via Danny C. and its rechristening as Narcotics Anonymous. Those interested in this history are referred to the following: White, W., Budnick, C., & Pickard, B. (2011). Narcotics Anonymous: Its history and culture. (For unabridged Counselor, 12(2), 10-15, 22-27, 36-39, 46-50. http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/pr/2011%20Narcotics%20Anonymous%20History%20and %20Culture.pdf)

To facilitate easier navigation of this document, the following hyperlinks will take the reader to specific years. Selecting the hyperlinked years in the document will also return the reader to this page.

1951	1958	1964	<b>1979</b>	<b>1987</b>	1993	1999	2005	2011
1952	1959	1965	1980	1988	1994	2000	2006	2012
1953	1960	1966	1981	1989	1995	2001	2007	2013
1954	1961	1969	1983	1990	1996	2002	2008	2014
1956	<b>1962</b>	<b>1970</b>	1985	1991	<b>1997</b>	2003	2009	2015
1957	1963	<b>1973</b>	1986	<b>1992</b>	1998	2004	2010	

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Abrahamson, E. M., & Pezet, A. W. (1951). *Body, mind and sugar*. Henry Holt and Company: New York. p. 190 – 191.

Anonymous. (1951). Narcotics Anonymous. American Journal of Public Health, 41, p. 254.

Vogel, V. H., & Vogel, V. E. (1951). *Facts about narcotics*. Chicago, IL: Scientific Research Associates, Inc. (references Narcotics Anonymous as a new community resource).

## 1952

St. Charles, A. J. (1952). *The narcotics menace*. Los Angeles, CA: Borden Publishing Co. (Notes Los Angeles chapter of Narcotics Anonymous, also known as Addicts Anonymous)

Deutsch, A. (1952). What we can do about the drug menace (U.S. Public Health Service - Public Affairs Pamphlet #186). September (includes a one-page section entitled Addicts Anonymous).

#### 1953

Fraser, H. F., & Grider, J. A. (1953). Treatment of drug addiction. *American Journal of Medicine*, May, 571-577. (Reference to Addicts Anonymous as a recovery support resource).

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Brown, W. (1954). *Monkey on my back*. London, England: Elek Books Limited.

Maurer, D. W., & Vogel, V. H. (1954). *Narcotics and narcotic addiction*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

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Buckwalter, J. A. (1956). *Merchants of misery*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association. (Notes operations of Addicts Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Habit Forming Drugs and NOTROL.)

Nyswander, M. (1956). *The drug addict as a patient*. New York: Grune & Stratton. (Brief description of Narcotics Anonymous).

Nyswander, M. (1956). A Research Project on the Treatment of Drug Addicts. *Bulletin, Drug Addiction.*Committee on Drug Addiction and Narcotics, National Academy of Sciences – National Research Council.

Minutes of Seventeenth Meeting January 30 – 31, 1956, Appendix K, pp. 1484-1493.

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Really living. (1958). Washington, D.C.: Narcotics Education, Inc.

Kiepura, W. T. (1958). A progress report on the conduct of a Narcotics Anonymous program in an adult penal institution, Soledad Correctional Training Facility.

Rosenthal, V. & Shimberg, E. (1958). A Program of Group Therapy with Incarcerated Narcotic Addicts. The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science, 49(2), p. 140 – 144.

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Murtagh, J. M., & Harris, S. (1959). *Who live in shadows*. New York: McGraw-Hill. (Notes existence of 4 Narcotics Anonymous groups).

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Post-withdrawal treatment of narcotics addiction at Lexington. (1960). What's New, Winter, # 221, Abbot Laboratories. (Notes existence of Addicts Anonymous).

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Brown, T. T. (1961). The Enigma of Drug Addiction. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas.

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Flier, W. C. (Ed.) (1962). *Problems in alcoholism and narcotics*. Proceedings of the Institute of Pastoral Psychology, Fordham University, under the auspices of the Dept. of Psychology, June, 1959. New York: Fordham Univ. Press. (Brief references to Narcotics Anonymous meeting in New York City.)

## 1963

King, A. (1963). Going to Lexington in D. Wakefield (Ed.); *The Addict* (pp. 126 – 138). Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications. (Brief reference to Addicts Anonymous).

Mental Health Monograph 2. (1963). *Narcotic drug addiction*. U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Public Health Service Publication No. 1021. (Brief reference to existence of Narcotics Anonymous).

Sullivan, O. (1963). A Bridge to the Addict in D. Wakefield (Ed.); *The Addict* (pp. 162 – 170). Greenwich, CT: Fawcett Publications. (Brief reference to Narcotics Anonymous).

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Harris, J. D. (1964). *The junkie priest: Father Daniel Egan*. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. (Brief discussion of Narcotics Anonymous in New York City).

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Moncus, M. L. (1964). Comparison of MMPI scales of members of Alcoholics Anonymous and members of Narcotics Anonymous (Thesis [E.S.]). New Mexico State University.

Yost, O. R. (1964). *The bane of drug addiction*. New York: The MacMillan Company. (Notes recent organizations of Narcotics Anonymous).

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Duncan, T. (1965). Understanding and helping the narcotic addict. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kron, Y. J., & Brown, E. M. (1965). *Mainline to nowhere: The making of a heroin addict*. New York: Pantheon Books.

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Jaffe, S. (1966). *Narcotics -- An American plan*. New York: Paul S. Eriksson, Inc. (brief reference to Narcotics Anonymous in New York City).

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Sagarin, E. (1969). *Odd man in: Societies of deviants in America*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books. (Contains profile of New York City Narcotics Anonymous).

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Garmon, W. S., & Strickland, P. (1970). Narcotics Anonymous. In *How to fight the drug menace* (pp. 96-97). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

Standifer, D. A., Cox, J. D., & Poimboeuf, C. E. (1970). *An exploratory study of certain socio-cultural, economic and demographic characteristics of the members of Narcotics Anonymous at Louisiana State Penitentiary* (Master's Thesis). Louisiana State University.

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Maurer, D., & Vogel, V. (1973). Narcotics and narcotic addiction. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

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Hawkins, D. J. (1980). Some Suggestions for "Self-Help" Approaches with Street Drug Abusers. *Journal of Psychedelic Drugs*, 12(2), 131-137.

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Nurco, D. (1981). The self-help movement and narcotics addicts. *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*, 8(2), 139-151.

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Marques, C. C. (1983). *Behavior control self-help groups members' attitudes regarding health care professionals* (Ph.D. Thesis – Psychology). University of Arizona.

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	DISSERTATION	THESIS	Video

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Muhleman, D. (1987). 12-step study groups in drug abuse treatment programs. Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, 19(3), 291-298.

A., L. (1987). Twelve Steps for addicts (pamphlet). Center City, MN: Hazelden.

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Atkins, R. G. (1991). Self-help groups as modern forms of religious life: A case study of Narcotics Anonymous (Master's Thesis). University of Virginia.

Gifford, P. D. (1991). A.A. and N.A. for adolescents. *Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse*, 1(3), 101-120.

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Lawson, G. W. (1992). Twelve-step programs and the treatment of adolescent substance abuse. In G. W. Lawson & A. W. Lawson (eds.), *Adolescent substance abuse: Etiology, treatment and prevention* (pp. 219-229). Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers.

Room, R. (1992). "Healing ourselves and our planet": The emergence and nature of a generalized Twelve-Step consciousness. *Contemporary Drug Problems*, 19(4), 717-740.

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Anderson, T. L. (1993). Types of identity change in drug using and recovery careers. *Sociological Focus*, 26(2), 133-145.

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**Future Updates:** This chronology will be updated as more scientific studies are published about Narcotics Anonymous. We encourage readers to send us information about new materials that are published.

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